MARVEL
003
ROYALS
EWING
SILAS
ROBSON
CHARALAMPIDIS

Eons ago, the alien race known as the Kree experimented upon early man, imbuing some of them with the potential to manifest amazing abilities. These humans became THE INHUMANS.

For millennia, they have used the mysterious element TERRIGEN to unlock their powers. But when modern-day King Black Bolt released Terrigen into the atmosphere—without consulting his queen, Medusa—it began poisoning the mutant population. Taking control of the throne, Medusa made the difficult decision to destroy the Terrigen cloud, meaning there will be no more new Inhumans. Heavy with guilt, she abdicated her rule—leaving the Inhumans without their Royals.

But if the Royal Family can no longer rule Inhumanity...they can still save it.

ROYALS

Marvel Boy, an explorer from another dimension, claims there is a secret buried in the remains of Hala, the Kree homeworld, that holds the future of the Inhuman race. Most of the Royal Family and several new Inhumans joined Marvel Boy on a journey into space, but Medusa had been keeping a secret of her own—and when her hair began to fall, she had no choice but to reveal it. It has been foretold that of the seven, only six will return—and Medusa is dying.

Still, when a Chitauri swarm attacked them just outside Earth's atmosphere, Medusa rallied and led her team to victory. But one member of their party stayed conspicuously out of the action—Black Bolt. Knowing their former king would never back down from a threat to his people, Medusa confronted him and exposed his true identity: Maximus, Black Bolt's mad brother, who she thought she had just locked away in a prison among the stars.

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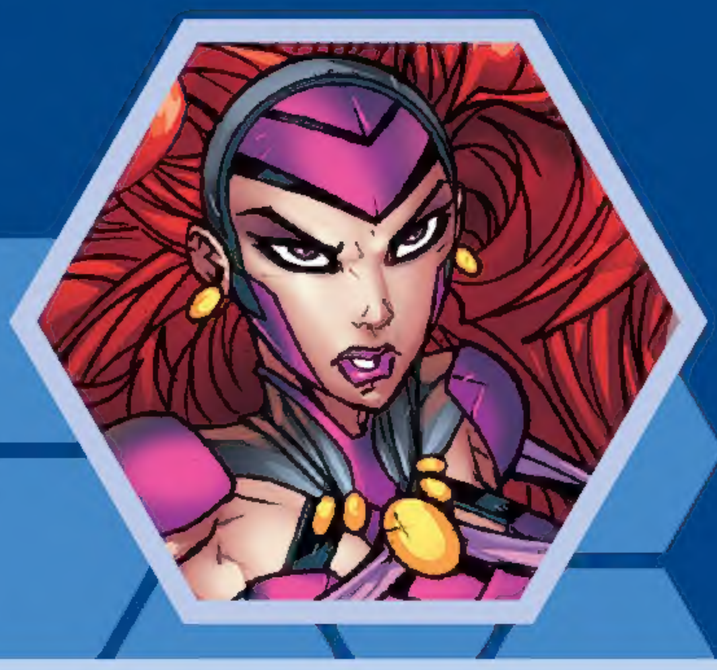

MEDUSA

Wife of Black Bolt. Her hair is stronger than steel—and entirely under her control.

MAXIMUS

Brother of Black Bolt. Super-genius and mind-controller. Completely insane.

CRYSTAL

Sister of Medusa. She has total control over air, earth, fire, and water.

GORGON

Cousin of Black Bolt. One stomp of his hooves makes the earth tremble.

SWAIN

A new Inhuman. She can push emotions and opinions in her favor.

MARVEL BOY

Kree explorer from another dimension. Engineered with insect traits for combat superiority.

FLINT

A new Inhuman. Rock and stone obey his thoughts—the bigger, the better.

FIVE THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW.
THE LAST INHUMAN COMMUNES WITH THE PAST.
MAXIMUS.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
Tomorrow's Never There
AL EWING writer THONY SILAS (present and future) & WILL ROBSON (past) artists
JIM CHARALAMPIDIS color artist VC's CLAYTON COWLES letterer
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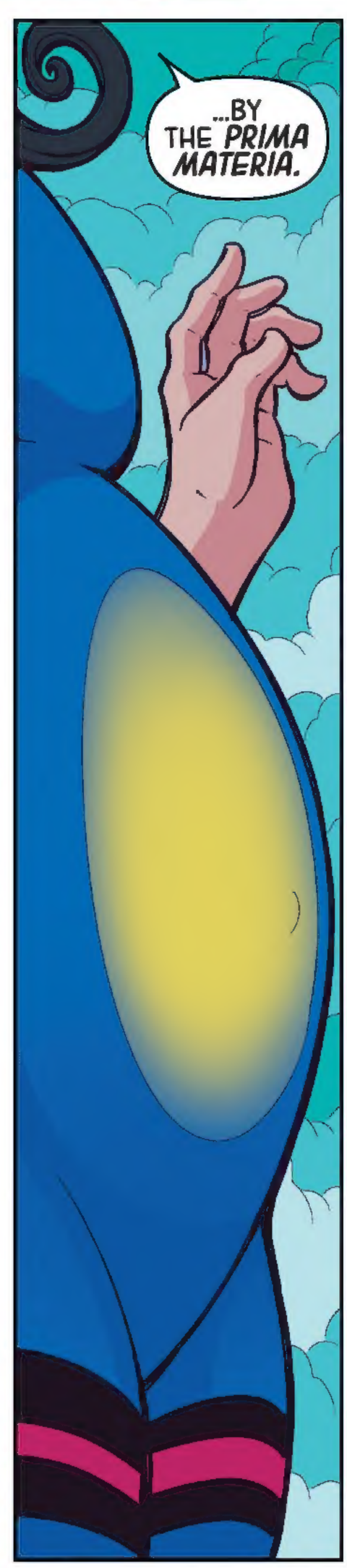
JOE QUESADA chief creative officer DAN BUCKLEY president ALAN FINE exec. producer INHUMANS created by STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

NOW.
MAXIMUS.
AGE 17.
MAXIMUS!
MAXIMUS
BEFORE BIRTH.
I WAS THINKING... MAXIMUS.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, RYNDA?

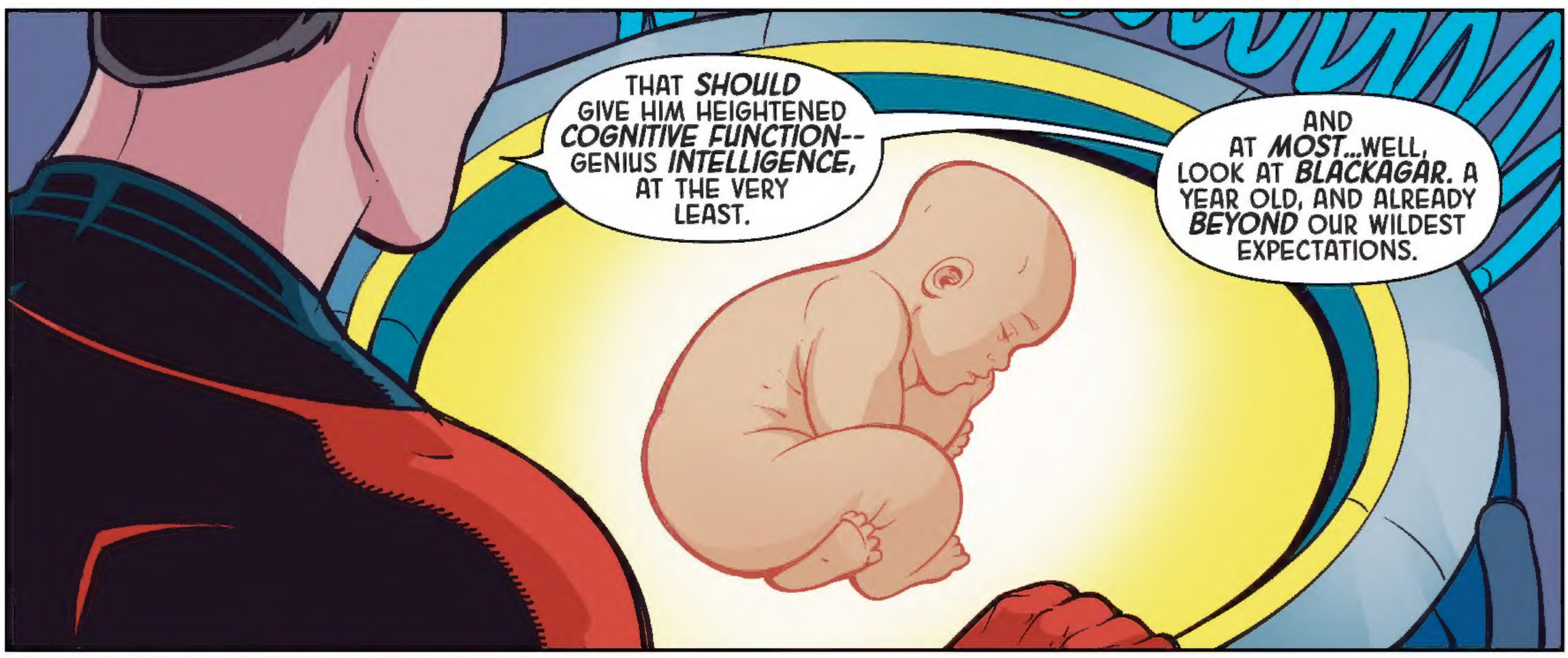
WELL, IT'S A BETTER NAME FOR OUR SON THAN "SUBJECT TWO."
A LITTLE GRANDIOSE, PERHAPS...
WE DON'T WANT HIM FEELING INFERIOR, DO WE? NOT IF HE'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO COMPETE WITH HIS BROTHER...
HIS BROTHER CAN WRECK A CITY BY CRYING, AGON.
AH, BUT WE'LL BE ABLE TO RAISE THIS ONE OUTSIDE A SEALED ANECHOIC CHAMBER.
WELL, PROBABLY.
THAT REMINDS ME. I WAS TALKING TO AZUR EARLIER-- MY SISTER-IN-LAW.
SHE SEEMS TO THINK THERE'S SOMETHING... WRONG WITH WHAT WE'RE DOING WITH BLACKAGAR AND LITTLE SUBJECT TWO.
MAXIMUS, DARLING--
--WAIT, IS SHE THE ONE WHO'S ALWAYS DRONING ON ABOUT THE ALPHA PRIMITIVES? AS IF THEY'RE PEOPLE?
WHAT DOES YOUR BROTHER SEE IN HER?
OH, RANDAC KNOWS. MANDER'S ALWAYS BEEN STRANGE.
ANYWAY, SHE THINKS WE SHOULDN'T BE EXPERIMENTING ON OUR CHILDREN AT ALL...
...
WELL, WHOSE CHILDREN SHOULD WE EXPERIMENT ON?

ANYWAY. LET'S PRESS ON.
PUSH YOUR GIFT TO THE *LIMIT*, PLEASE, DEAR. WE DON'T WANT YOU CONTRACTING *SECONDARY TERRIGENISIS* FROM THIS...
LET ME *CONCENTRATE*...
THERE.
NOW...NOW I AM THE *FILTER*. NOW *I* DECIDE WHAT ENTERS MY SYSTEM...
...AND THAT OF MY UNBORN *CHILD*.

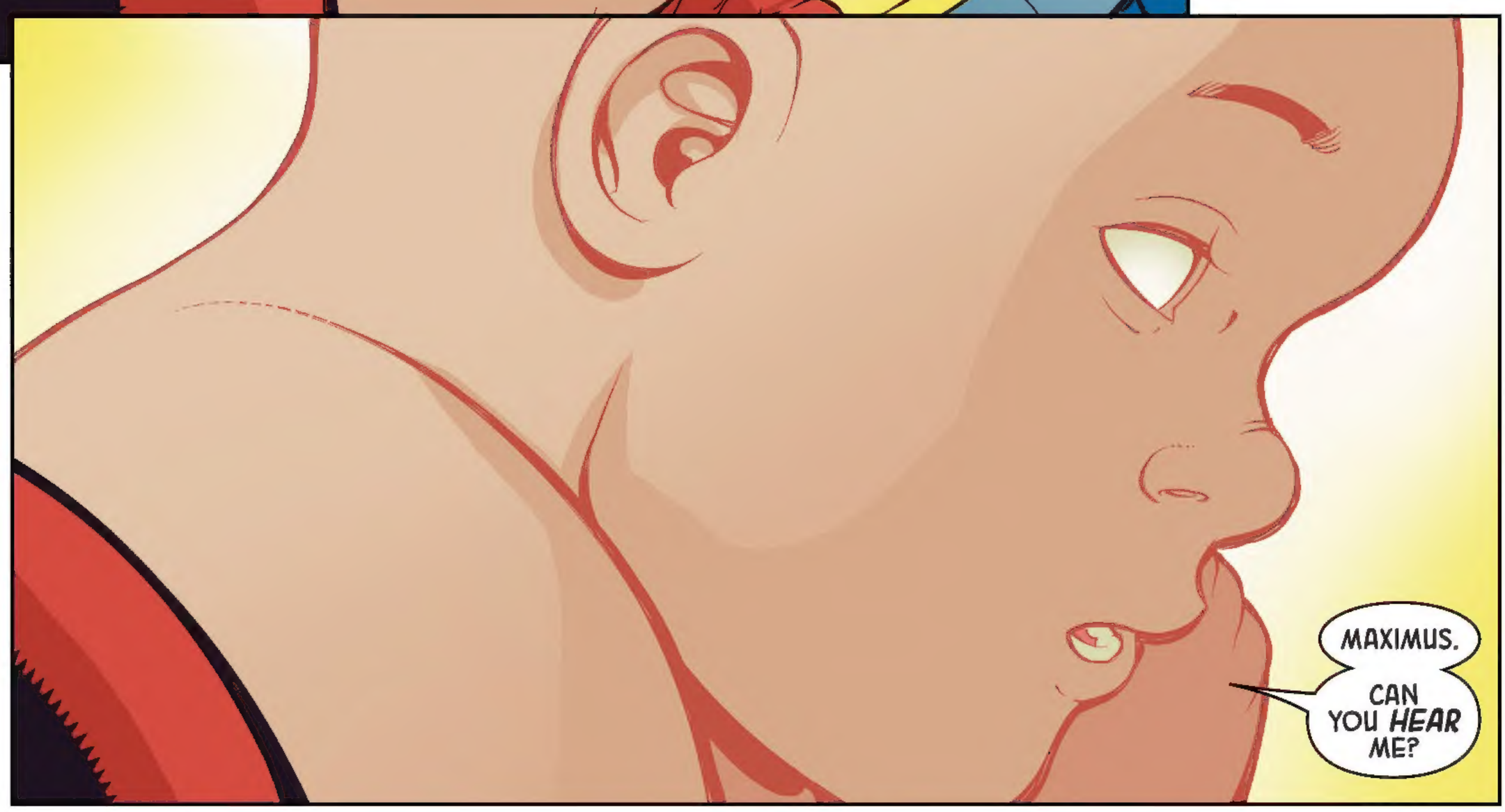
AND I ALLOW NO *IMPURITIES*. NO *IMPERFECTIONS*.
I BREATHE IN THE *SACRED MISTS*... AND MAKE THEM *MORE* SACRED.
AND THUS, THE CHILD INSIDE ME IS TOUCHED BY *MYSTERY*... BY THAT GREAT *SECRET* INCHOATE IN MAN AND *MORE-THAN-MAN*...

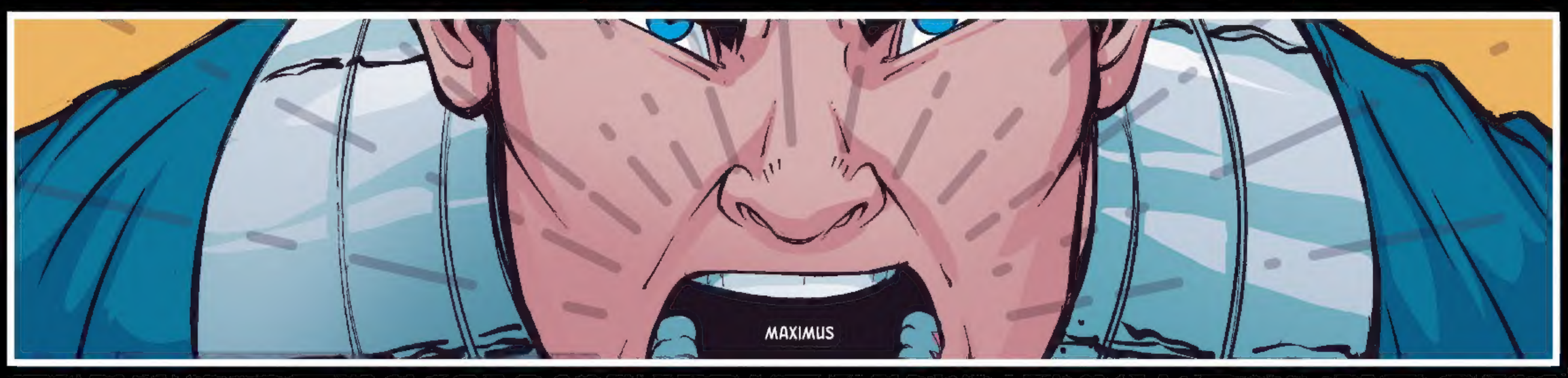

...BY THE *PRIMA MATERIA*.

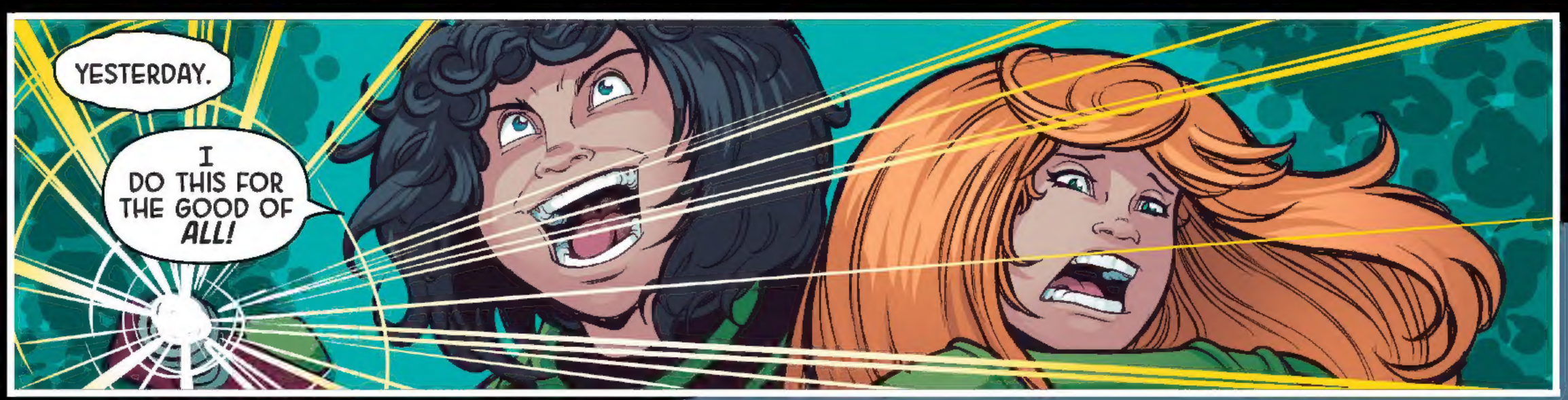
YOU ENJOY THIS PART, DON'T YOU, DARLING?
REMEMBER--AS WE AGREED. CONCENTRATE ON THE BRAIN WITH THIS ONE--DIRECT THE TERRIGEN PARTICLES THERE.


THAT SHOULD GIVE HIM HEIGHTENED COGNITIVE FUNCTION--GENIUS INTELLIGENCE, AT THE VERY LEAST.
AND AT MOST...WELL, LOOK AT BLACKAGAR. A YEAR OLD, AND ALREADY BEYOND OUR WILDEST EXPECTATIONS.

WHAT WILL MAXIMUS BECOME?


MAXIMUS.
CAN YOU HEAR ME?





NOW.

MAXIMUS.

CAN YOU *HEAR* ME?

SORRY, MEDUSA. A BRIEF MOMENT OF *DEJÀ VU.*

"I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE..."

SPARE ME. I HAVE NO PATIENCE TODAY FOR YOUR BRITTLE *WITTICISMS*...YOUR *NON SEQUITURS*...

...YOUR *IMAGE INDUCERS.*

WHERE IS THE MAN YOU *PRETENDED* TO BE, MAXIMUS?

WHERE IS *BLACK BOLT?*

OH, COME *ON,* MEDUSA. YOU KNOW *THAT* ONE.

IMAGE INDUCERS, REMEMBER? HE'S WHERE YOU *PUT* HIM. WHERE YOU WANTED TO PUT *ME.*

"REMEMBER?"

I PASS SENTENCE AGAINST YOU, MAXIMUS BOLTAGON.

YOU WILL BE TAKEN FAR FROM HERE--AND INSTALLED IN A SECURE FACILITY IN THE STARS.

"ON YOU WE TURN OUR BACKS."

THE LAST ROYAL COMMAND *EVER. TELL* THEM, MEDUSA.

TELL THEM WHAT THAT *MEANS.*

DUH. IT MEANS WE'RE TURNING THIS SHIP AROUND AND HEADING BACK TO EARTH.
AND THEN WE'RE GETTING BLACK BOLT BACK AND PUTTING YOUR CREEPY BUTT WHERE IT BELONGS.
RIGHT, GUYS?
UM... RIGHT?
IT'S... NOT THAT SIMPLE, SWAIN. SHE TURNED HER BACK.
THAT HAS A CERTAIN MEANING--
IT MEANS IT CANNOT BE UNDONE.
WHEN WE TURN OUR BACK ON ONE OF OUR OWN, THEY ARE GONE FROM OUR SIGHT-- THEIR NAMES FOREVER UNSPOKEN.
IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THAT MEANS WE HAVE NO RECORD OF BLACK BOLT'S LOCATION. WHEREVER HIS PRISON IS, WE CAN'T GO AFTER HIM.
BUT YOU COULD CONTACT THEM--
AND WE WILL. BUT... THEY WILL NOT RESPOND TO US.
WE TURNED OUR BACK.

STILL, WE CAN MAKE A *RETURN TRIP*--LOCK HIM AWAY ON *EARTH*--

OH, I THINK WE'VE ESTABLISHED THAT HE WON'T STAY ANYWHERE WE PUT HIM.

HOW *DID* YOU GET OUT, MAXIMUS?

OH, YES. YOU LOCKED ME IN A CELL WITH ELECTRONIC *PSYCHIC DAMPERS,* DIDN'T YOU? ADMITTEDLY, I'VE NEVER ESCAPED FROM ONE OF *THOSE* BEFORE.

BUT THEN... I'VE NEVER *WANTED* TO BEFORE.

"I HID A *MULTI-TOOL* WHERE YOU WOULDN'T FIND IT.

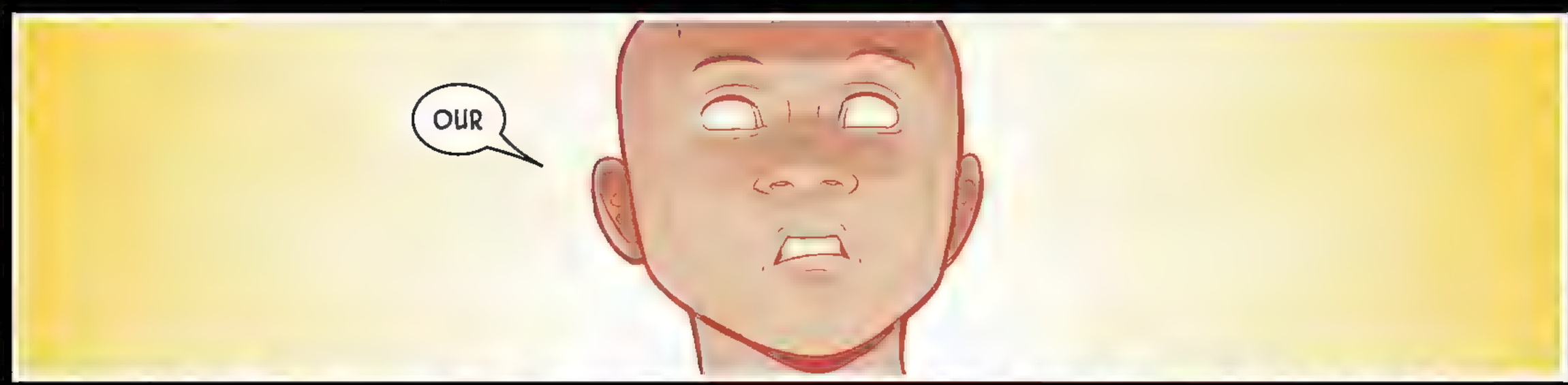
"A LITTLE KIT I BUILT MYSELF-- *SCREWDRIVERS, ELECTRON-STYLUS,* HACKING SUITE FOR THE *CAMERAS, IMAGE INDUCERS...*

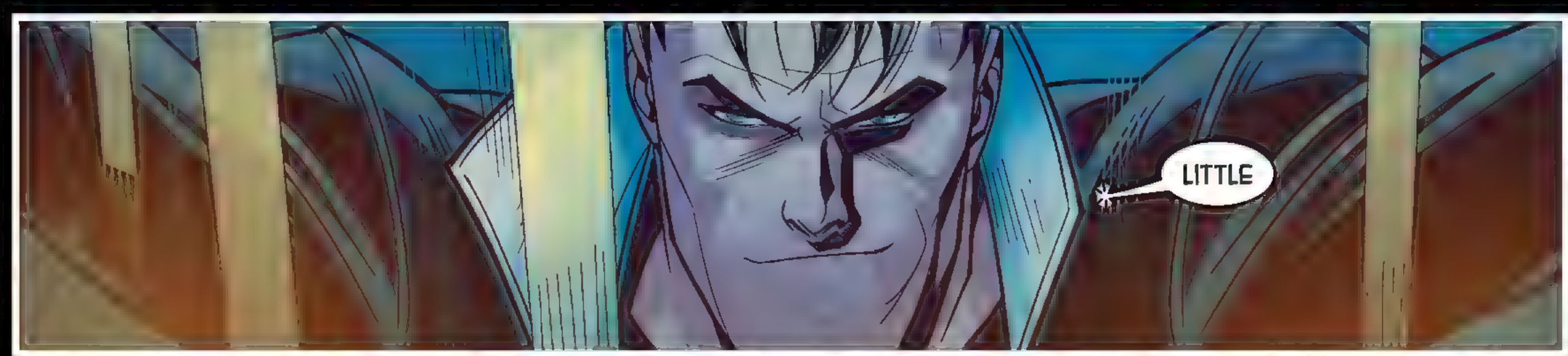
"*YOU* KNOW, THE *BASICS.*

"OF COURSE, TAMPERING WITH THE *DAMPERS* AND THE *DOOR LOCKS* WAS THE *EASY* PART.

"THE HARD PART WAS GETTING BLACKAGAR'S *GUARD* DOWN..."

LET ME WHISPER THE *SECRET.*

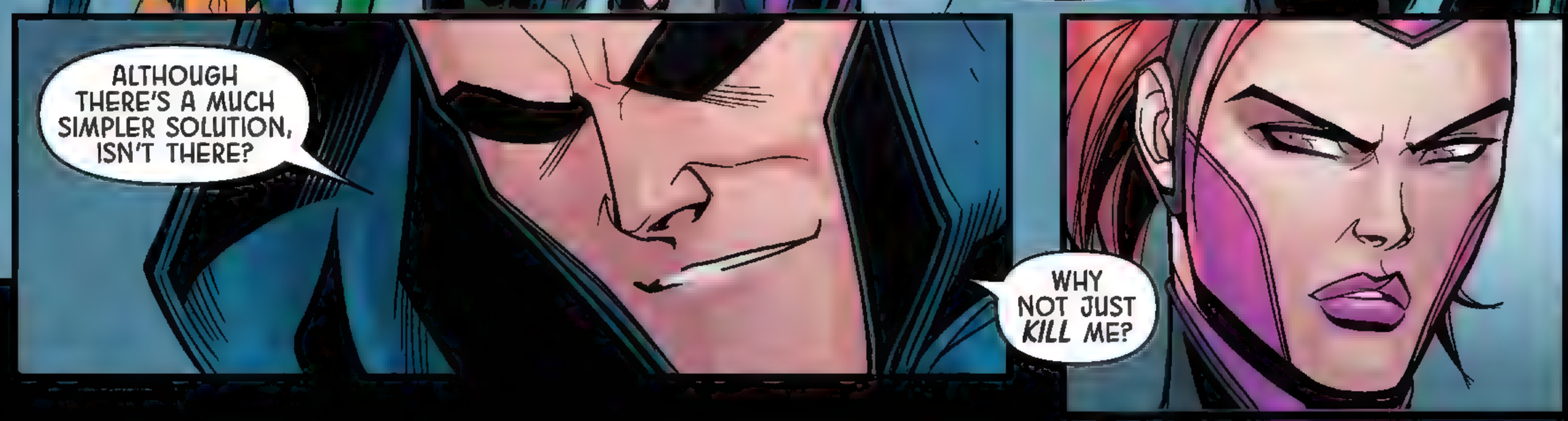

OUR


LITTLE

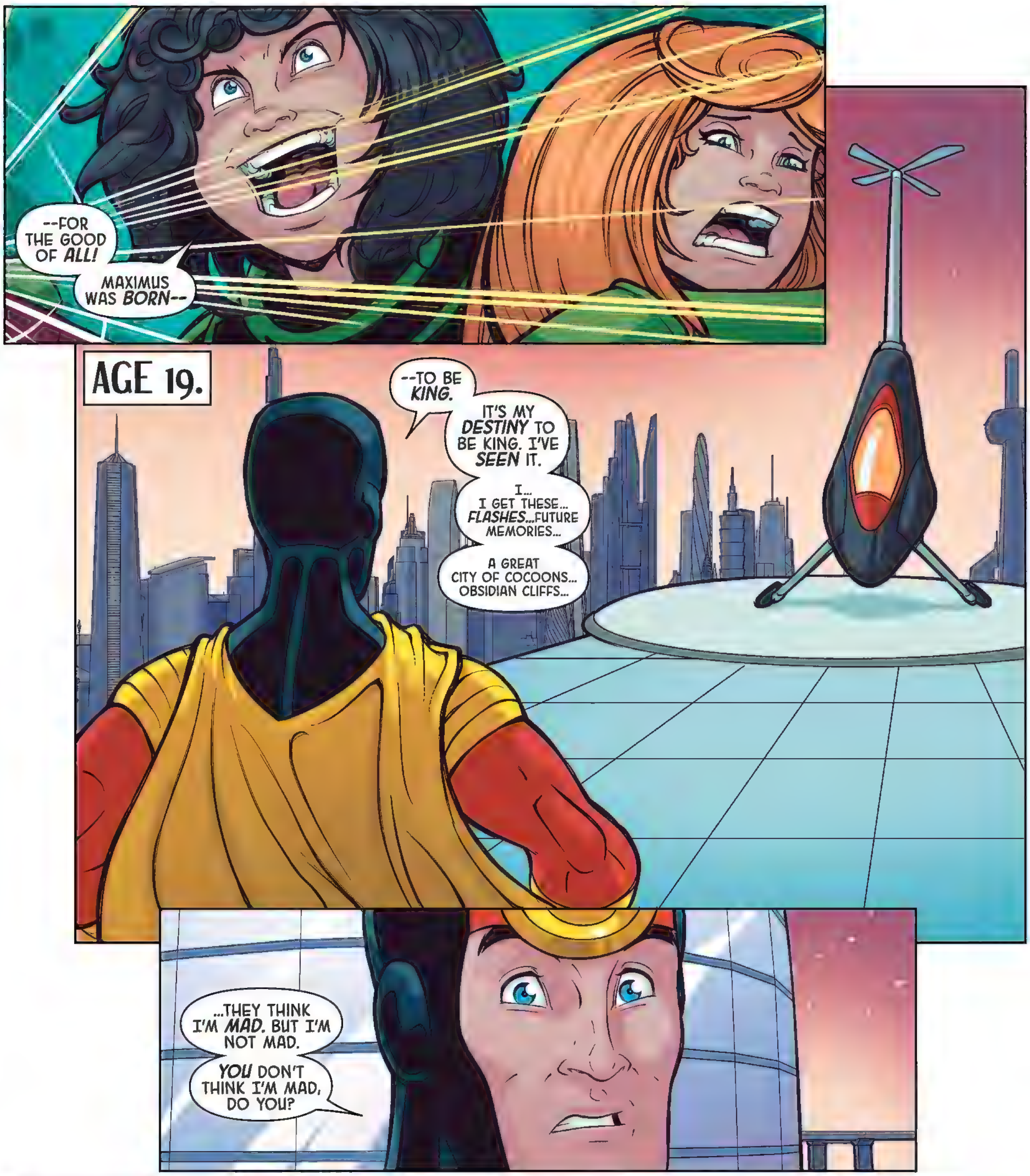
SECRET.

MAXIMUS

ENOUGH.
SWAIN-- IF YOU STAY CLOSE TO HIM, YOUR TELEPATHY WILL CANCEL OUT HIS MIND-CONTROL.
AND A GOOD THING, TOO. IT GETS SO BORING WHEN YOU CAN JUST MAKE PEOPLE DO WHAT YOU WANT.


ALTHOUGH THERE'S A MUCH SIMPLER SOLUTION, ISN'T THERE?
WHY NOT JUST KILL ME?

COMMANDER...?
K-KRAKK
THERE. YOU'VE EVEN GOT A VOLUNTEER.
WELL?
...SOMEONE WATCHES HIM AT ALL TIMES. HE TOUCHES NOTHING ON THIS SHIP.
YOU ARE AS MERCIFUL AS YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL, YOUR EX-MAJESTY--
SHUT UP.
OF COURSE. MAXIMUS LIVES ONLY TO SERVE.
I DO THIS--


--FOR THE GOOD OF ALL!
MAXIMUS WAS BORN--
AGE 19.
--TO BE KING.
IT'S MY DESTINY TO BE KING. I'VE SEEN IT.
I... I GET THESE... FLASHES...FUTURE MEMORIES...
A GREAT CITY OF COCOONS... OBSIDIAN CLIFFS...
...THEY THINK I'M MAD. BUT I'M NOT MAD.
YOU DON'T THINK I'M MAD, DO YOU?

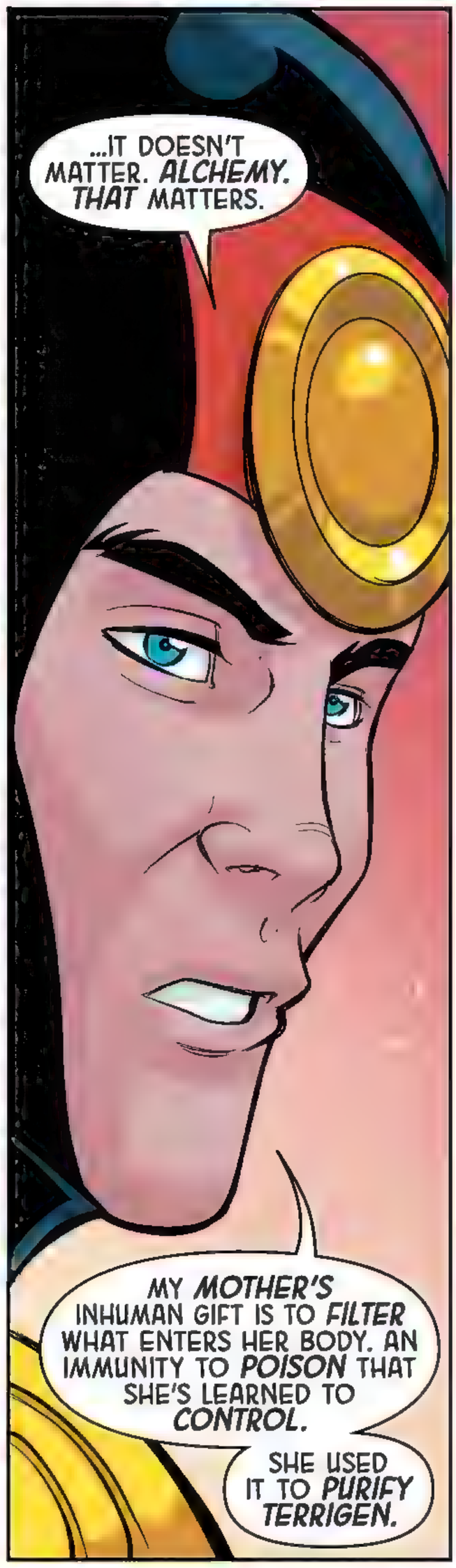
NO.
THE KREE KNOW SOMETHING OF DESTINY, SON OF AGON.
...
AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF ALCHEMY?

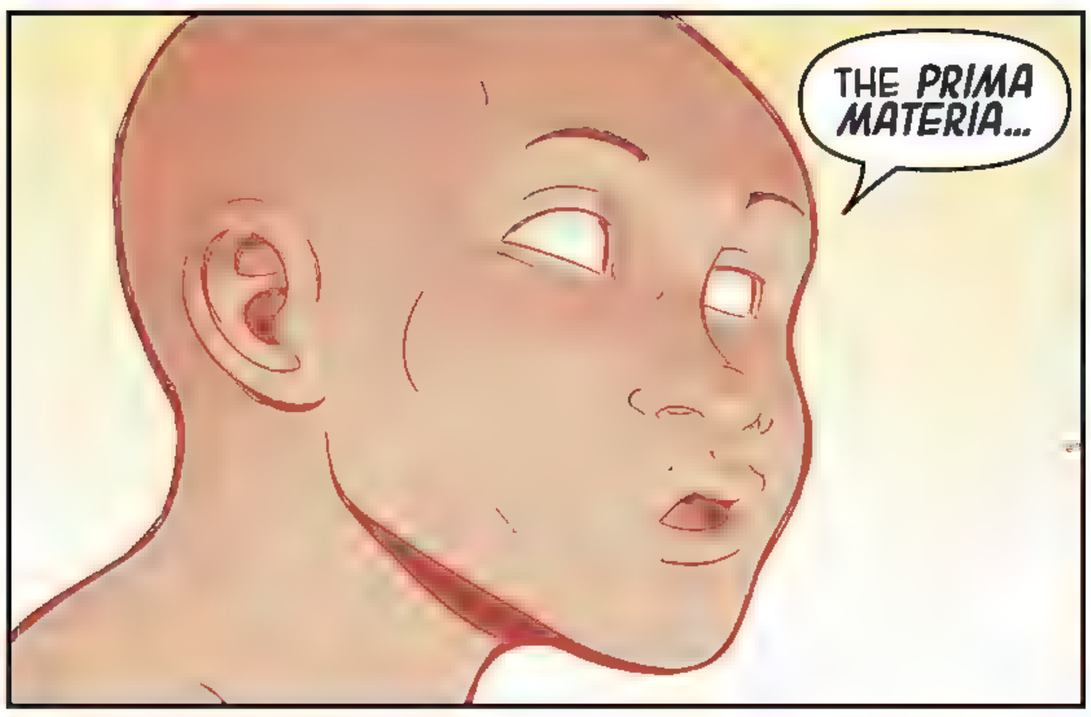
MY PARENTS... *DID* THINGS TO MY BROTHER. IN THE *WOMB.* AND TO *ME.*

THEY'RE UP IN THEIR *LABORATORY* NOW--UP *THERE.* MAYBE THEY'RE *WATCHING,* EH?

MAYBE THIS IS *ALL* THEIR EXPERIMENT.

MY WHOLE *LIFE...*





THIS IS THE MOMENT.

I AM A YOUNG MAN, AND I AM MAKING A *BARGAIN* WITH AN AMBASSADOR FROM A *ROGUE FACTION* OF THE *KREE.*

MY *TREACHERY,* IN RETURN FOR *KNOWLEDGE*...OR *REVENGE*...OR *BOTH.*

"MY BROTHER *OVERHEARS.*

"WE *FIGHT,* WHILE THE KREE ESCAPE.

"WE ARE *ALWAYS* FIGHTING.

YOU'RE *TOO LATE,* FOOL!

THE KREE SHIP IS *ALOFT!*

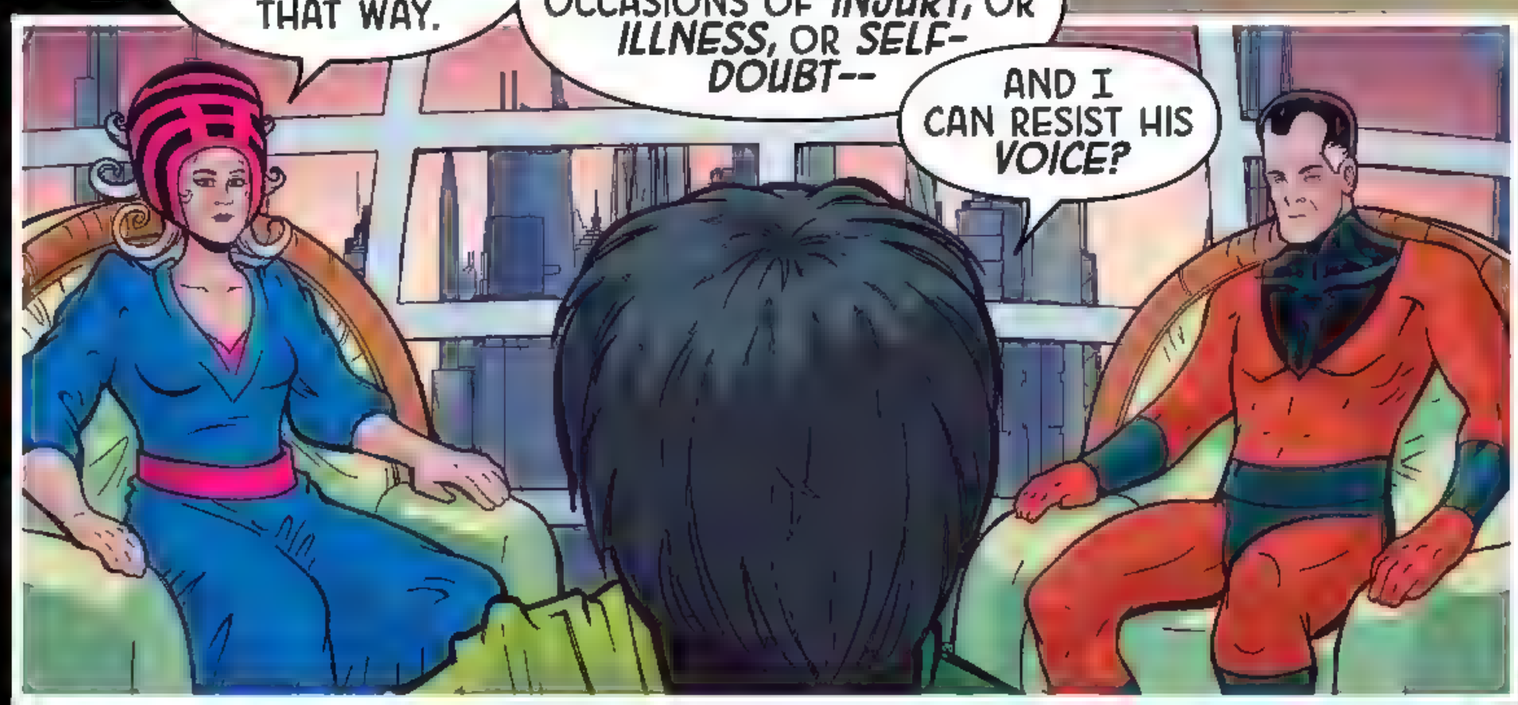
"WE ARE ALWAYS *FIGHTING,* AND THE SHIP IS ALWAYS *ALOFT.*

"FOREVER HANGING IN SPACE.

"*WAITING* FOR THE ENDLESS MOMENT.

"THE MOMENT BLACK BOLT *SPEAKS.*"

MAXIMUS



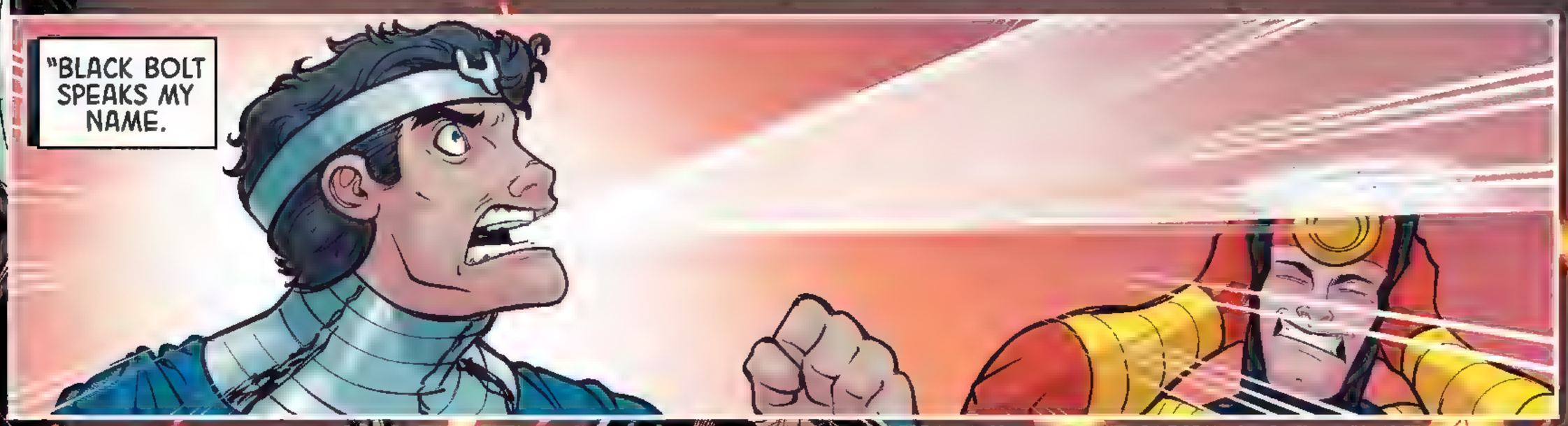
"KEEP IT A *SECRET.*"

OUR.

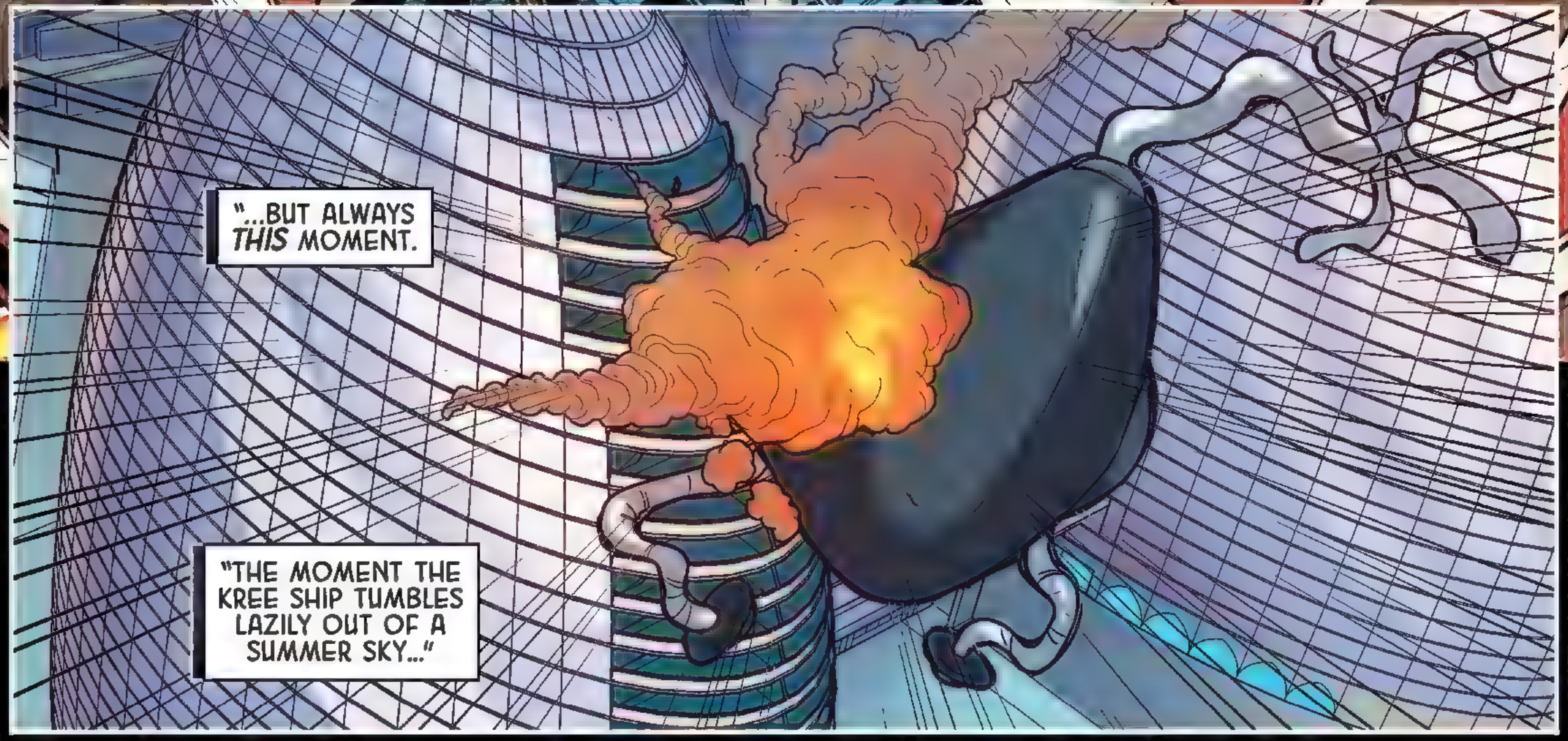
LITTLE.

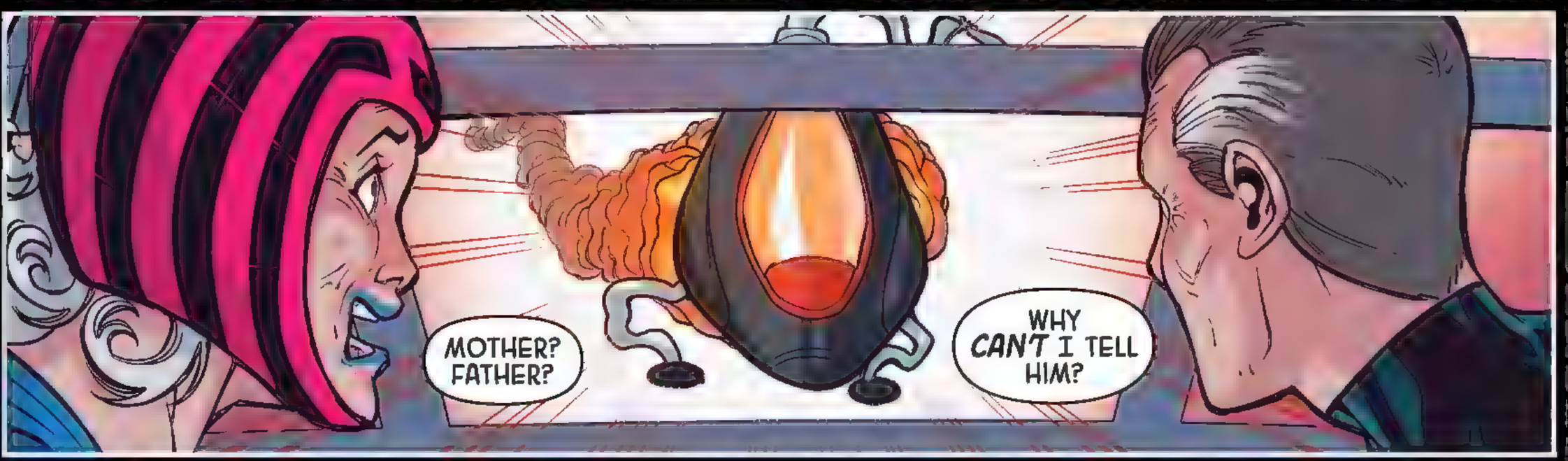
SECRET.

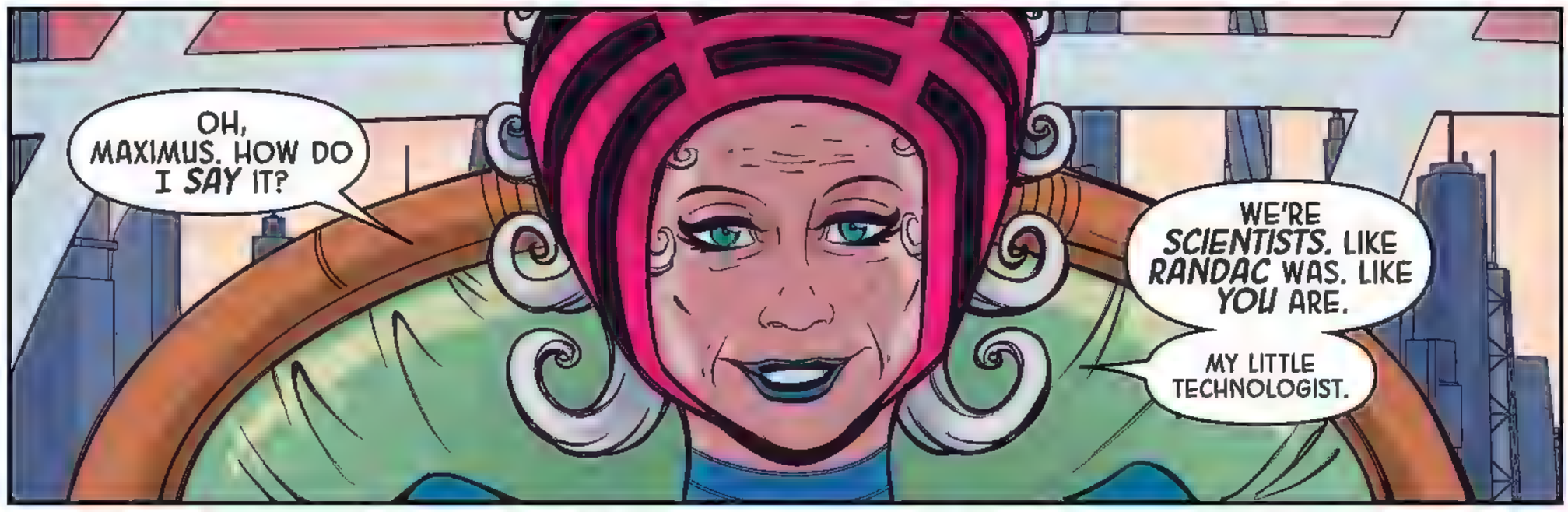
MAXIMUS

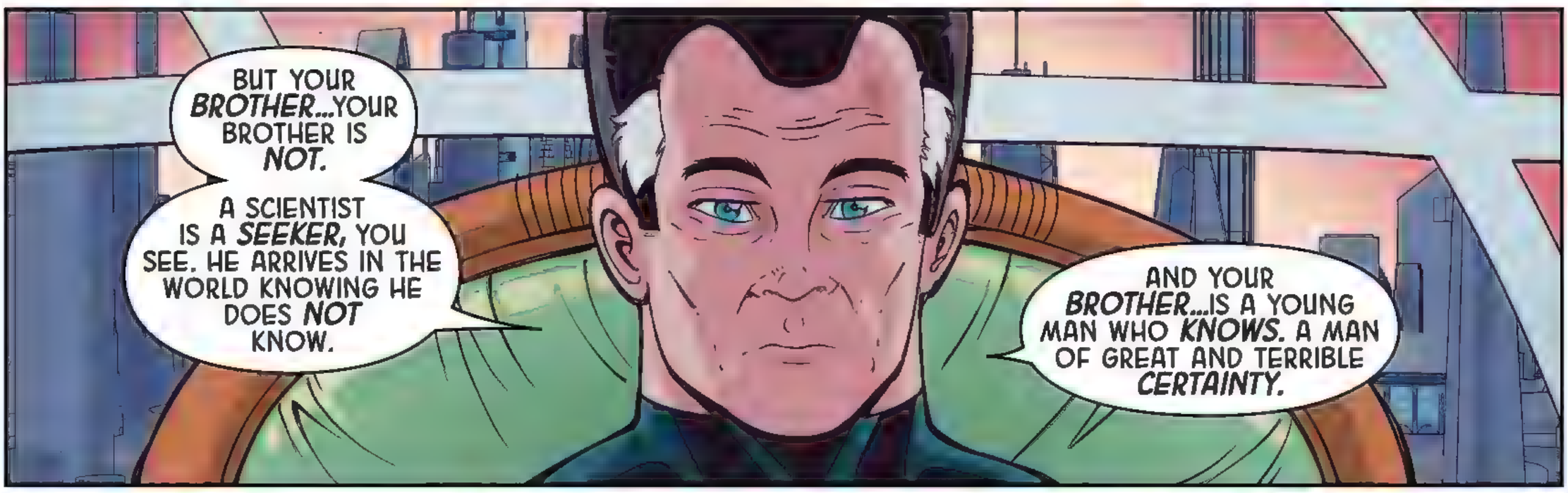

"BLACK BOLT SPEAKS MY NAME.

AND HIS VOICE *ECHOES* THROUGH MY MIND. SO *LOUD*...
AND I SEE MY WHOLE *LIFE*, LAID OUT LIKE A *MAP*.
EACH MOMENT *CONNECTED*...


"...BUT ALWAYS *THIS* MOMENT.
"THE MOMENT THE KREE SHIP TUMBLES LAZILY OUT OF A SUMMER SKY..."


MOTHER? FATHER?
WHY *CAN'T* I TELL HIM?


OH, MAXIMUS. HOW DO I SAY IT?
WE'RE SCIENTISTS. LIKE RANDAC WAS. LIKE YOU ARE.
MY LITTLE TECHNOLOGIST.


BUT YOUR BROTHER...YOUR BROTHER IS NOT.
A SCIENTIST IS A SEEKER, YOU SEE. HE ARRIVES IN THE WORLD KNOWING HE DOES NOT KNOW.
AND YOUR BROTHER...IS A YOUNG MAN WHO KNOWS. A MAN OF GREAT AND TERRIBLE CERTAINTY.

YOUR BROTHER IS A KING.

AND I'M SURE HE'LL BE A FINE ONE...IF NOTHING HAPPENS.
BUT THE KING AT NOON IS NOT THE KING AT MIDNIGHT, MAXIMUS.
AND I FEAR YOUR BROTHER'S CERTAINTY...
...COULD BE OUR DEATH.

"IT IS ALWAYS THIS MOMENT.

"ALWAYS."

NO...

YES. THAT'S THE SECRET.

I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER--BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THEY MADE ME TO BE.

THE PARENTS YOU KILLED.

THEY DIDN'T JUST EXPERIMENT ON YOU, BLACKAGAR. THEY SAW YOU.

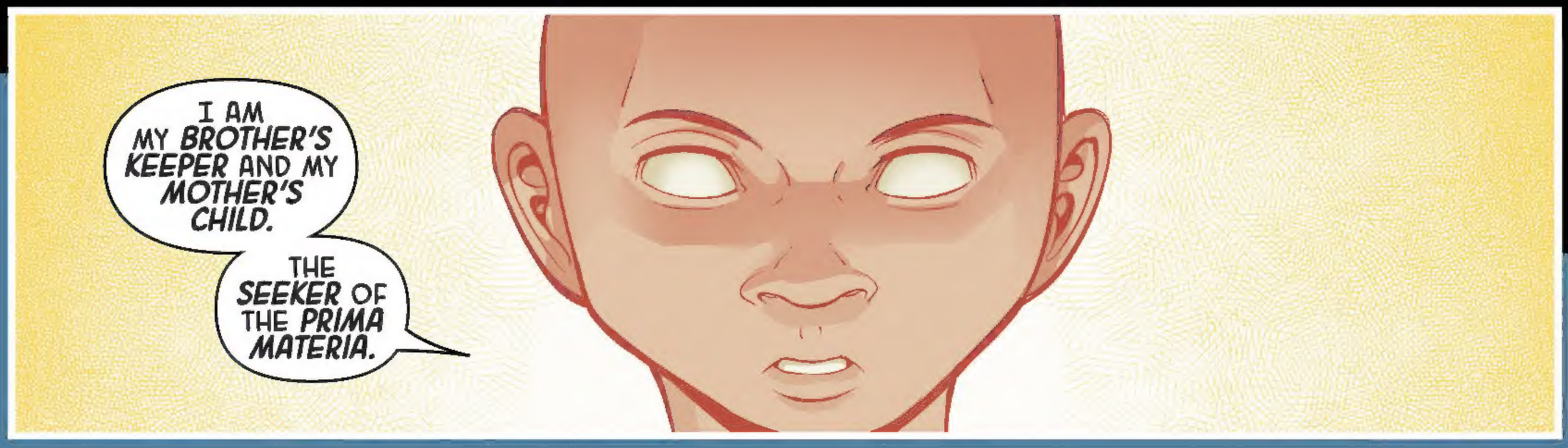
AND THEY WERE AFRAID OF YOU.

AND THAT HURTS YOU, DOESN'T IT?

ENOUGH TO LET ME IN.

...AND... THERE.
NOW, TRIGGER YOUR IMAGE INDUCER...
...AND GO TO SLEEP.
I DO FEEL BAD ABOUT THIS, BLACKAGAR. BUT I THINK WE BOTH KNOW THE TRUTH. IN DIFFICULT TIMES LIKE THESE, YOU JUST CAN'T BE TRUSTED.
BUT OF COURSE, WHATEVER THEY DO TO YOU...
...YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH WORSE TO ME...
MAXIMUS!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
WHAT...
WHAT HAVE I DONE...?

ONLY WHAT I MUST.
BECAUSE I AM MAXIMUS.


I AM MY BROTHER'S KEEPER AND MY MOTHER'S CHILD.
THE SEEKER OF THE PRIMA MATERIA.

I AM THE LAST INHUMAN.
AND WHAT I DO, I DO...

...FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.
NEXT STOP, HALA.
TO BE CONTINUED...

ROYAL MAIL

Send letters to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM marked "OKAY TO PRINT."

Greetings, fellow Inhum-fans! I'm Al Ewing, writer on ROYALS, and this is the inaugural letter column, which we're calling ROYAL MAIL. Can you think of a better letter column title? Then send it in! We're open to suggestions! Send them—and any other mail—to mheroes@marvel.com, mark them OKAY TO PRINT, and we'll print the best! Now let's open the royal mailbag…

I'll be honest, I knew very little about the Inhumans until the INHUMANS VS. X-MEN/UNCANNY INHUMANS tie-ins, and after reading INHUMANS PRIME and ROYALS #1, I've got to say that I'm actually pretty intrigued with the mythos of the Inhumans (Karnak and Maximus being my current favorites) and their culture with the religious significance they have with Terrigen. I mean, as a new reader, I'm glad there is going to be the sense of discovering the mythos of Terrigen—I'm assuming there will be things to discover about Terrigen that might surprise even the Royals. We are learning as they are learning too. Anyway, just wanted to give my thoughts and say that I'm really interested in seeing what's in store for the Royal family on their journey.

Marko Perez

Glad we've got you interested, Marko! We had some hints about the mysteries of Terrigen in this very issue—what do you make of them?

Hello!

Wow, did Al Ewing, Jonboy Meyers, and Ryan Kinnaird get ROYALS off to an amazing start! It's got all the epic weirdness I would expect from an Inhumans book—but it's the artwork that seals it for me. They absolutely nailed it. I loved UNCANNY INHUMANS, but I have to admit, I haven't been this excited for an Inhumans book since James Asmus and Stefano Caselli's ALL-NEW INHUMANS. (By the way, I am THRILLED that Swain is a part of ROYALS! Thank you, Al Ewing, for including her in the book!)

I can't wait for the next issue of ROYALS. Thankfully, it doesn't look like I have to wait long! Keep up the good work!

Seren

Thank you, Seren! We're big fans of ALL-NEW INHUMANS as well—that was one of my reasons for including Swain on the team. Anyway, as you've seen, there's plenty more epic weirdness to come—hope you stick with us!

Hey Marvel,

I really loved ROYALS #1.

What Charles Soule did with the Inhumans was amazing, and it looks like Al Ewing is just as good.

Why do I like the Inhumans so much? Because they are their own thing—Charles Soule just tried to tell a good story about them, and it worked!

Keep up the good work, and I hope the Inhumans stay strong!

Tom

Thank you, Tom! I agree—the Inhumans are very much their own thing, and right now there are three very different versions of that special something out there! I hope you're trying out our sibling title SECRET WARRIORS, not to mention the beautiful strangeness of BLACK BOLT, which answers the question: if Maximus is here in ROYALS, where is Black Bolt?

And that's all for now! Send your suggestions in for a new name for the letter column—if we don't get one we like, we'll see you back here next month for more ROYAL MAIL!

ADDITIONAL READING:

See Medusa's last act as a queen—sentencing her brother-in-law to prison (or so she thought!)—in **INHUMANS PRIME #1**. Wanna know more about the history of the Inhumans and the earliest days of Black Bolt and Maximus' sibling rivalry? Check out the **INHUMANS: THE ORIGIN OF THE INHUMANS** TPB. For the moment when Black Bolt tried to save his people and in so doing killed his parents and drove his brother mad, look for **AVENGERS #95**.

ROYALS

NEXT: ROYALS #4!

BLACK BOLT #2
AVAILABLE IN JUNE!

SECRET WARRIORS #2
AVAILABLE IN MAY!

SECRET WARRIORS #3
AVAILABLE IN JUNE!

ZONE